

THE WISDOM OF THE EAST SERIES

EDITED BY J. L. CRANMER-BYNG, M.C.

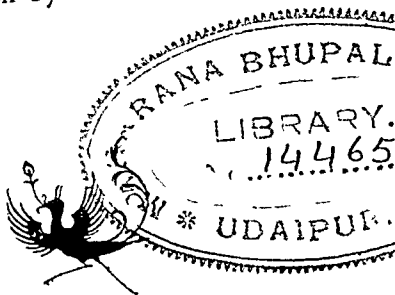
THE HARVEST OF LEISURE

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The Harvest of Leisure

Translated from the Tsure-Zure Gusa
by Ryukichi Kurata

Introduction by L. Adams Beck



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EDITORIAL NOTE

THE object of the editor of this series is a very definite one. He desires above all things that in their humble way, these books shall be the ambassadors of good-will and understanding between East and West, the old world of Thought, and the new of Action. He is confident that a deeper knowledge of the great ideals and lofty philosophy of Oriental thought may help to a revival of that true spirit of Charity which neither despises nor fears the nations of another creed and colour.

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TO
L. ADAMS BECK

In Memoriam

Blossoms are scattered by the wind and the wind cares nothing, but the blossoms of the heart no wind can touch, and when a friend has left us for another country and is no more seen, *her* beloved presence still lives in memory.

The Harvest of Leisure, p. 37.

INTRODUCTION

HERE is a book which presents the Japanese Gentleman of the olden time at his best, for few have had such advantages as the man who here unveils his personality to us through Ryukichi Kurata's translation and few have made such excellent use of them.

Yoshida Kenkō was born in the year A.D. 1283 at the time when in England our kings were still concerned with crusading and other such warlike activities as left little room for the translucent and beautiful culture which marks his reflections—reflections calm and clear as those shed by a blue sky with floating clouds upon a pool in some still garden where the willows droop over the still mirror and not a leaf stirs in either. This sort of book is one in which the Anglo-Saxon race has never excelled. We have had more pretentious and accomplished essayists, but few of the type of Yoshida Kenkō, whose reflections, short or long, are the natural effusion of a heart sufficiently at leisure from itself to contemplate mankind with serene impartiality, and himself as but an item in the general score. That attitude must always be rare in the West, where individualism reigns supreme. His Buddhist training—

the training which sees each man only as a part of the Absolute playing for a time at individual personality—gives a power of serene detachment practically impossible for us, and its strangeness has a loveliness like that of a distant bell over twilight fields.

The Western writer who comes nearest Kenkō in this strain of impartiality is perhaps the great and more robust and full-blooded Montaigne, though no doubt in his earlier days Yoshida Kenkō could also have held his own better than well in the crises where swords speak instead of tongues. Of the two he is infinitely the more serene and detached, and has a sensitiveness of spirit much surpassing that of Montaigne, though he falls far below him in sustained and constructive ability. His observations are those of a man who has weighed worldly opinion and smiles at its pretensions compared with the beauty and abiding interest of the simple things of life—the mystic loveliness of nature, the wisdom of living creatures, the One Spirit dwelling in both which, moving also in man, awakens his deepest intuitions and unites him with them.

His personal history is interesting. Few men can have better known the world he relinquished than he. His father was Kaneaki Urabe, descended from an ancestor rememberable in Japanese history. He himself was a Court official, and the name he then bore was Yoshida no Kaneyoshi.

It is said that grief for his Emperor's death severed the link which bound him to the world and its glories, though I think those who study the beautiful memory-pictures numbered 104 and 105 may guess at some more personal motive. Be that as it may, he became a Buddhist monk at the age of forty-two, taking the name in religion of Kenkō, which name is written with the same characters as Kaneyoshi. He is known as Yoshida Kenkō, because his family came from the village of Yoshida near Kyōto, and, as the writer of this book, he is generally alluded to in Japan as Kenkō Hōshi, or Kenkō the Monk. He died in the spring of 1350 at the age of sixty-eight.

But these are the outer circumstances which are now dust with the body that lies buried at Narabi-ga-Oka. We desire to know the man, immortal in his own country, whose eyes look into ours in this book.

It is probable that we understand him in his writing with more clarity than his contemporaries did in his speech. The delicacy and classic beauty of style which have won him abiding fame in Japan are difficult to transmit in English, but the spirit survives even translation, and discloses a man more likely to make a confidant of his writing-brush than of his friends. He loved solitude. In retiring from the world he did not seek the friendly circle of a monastery for his

hermitage, but chose a little lonely house in the wilds of Arashiyama far enough away from the imperial bustle of Kyōto.

I know Arashiyama and Kyōto. In the latter is the ceaseless bubble of life, which in his day must have centred in the Imperial Palace. In Arashiyama (the Hills of Storm) a river, lovely even among the lovely in Japan, first hurls its flying rapids from the hills, then runs more gravely through narrow gorges wooded to the top with thickly growing pines and other trees of lavish beauty. The hills crowd about the river as though to gaze entranced upon its living loveliness. A place of intimate communion with nature now, it must have been still more so in the days of slow-moving oxen transport, though even then the great people of Kyōto sometimes came out, as will be seen in this book, to make a meritorious pilgrimage to one or other of the temples hidden in the woods as they abide to this day. The surroundings encourage the contemplative spirit we find in his book, though it is said that at intervals the recluse would visit some friend in Kyōto and there for awhile would watch the Mirror of the Passing Show with the disillusioned tranquillity which is Nature's best gift to those who know her with the understanding of love. Indeed, then and always—

“You must love her ere to you
She will seem worthy of your love.”

But even his solitude is still an outer circumstance. What of the man himself? As a poet he was a star of the first magnitude, being one of the constellation of four major poets who adorned those spacious times, and it is easy to understand that with the reserve of the monk superposed upon that of the Japanese gentleman of rank, he would find his outlet in this "Harvest of Leisure" (as Mr. Kurata chooses to call it), and in his famous poetry rather than in social give and take. In the book itself there is often the suggestion of withdrawal at the moment when we think we are about to solve his riddle. With a finger on his lips he eludes us smiling. Thus we are given only the hints I have mentioned of his romance, and *she* has fluttered away into darkness like a blossom blown on the wind into the irretrievable past.

And of his own deepest convictions he says little more than any Buddhist layman of the period could have said, and the impression left is as much that of the Shintō love of simplicity and purity and of the Confucian ethic as of the great philosophy and faith of Buddhism. I incline to think that the mode of Kenkō's retreat from the world may have been influenced by that of his predecessor Kamo no Chōmei in the preceding century. The Buddhist conviction of the transience of life was strong in both, but perhaps stronger in the earlier recluse because he had had

before him the frightful object-lessons of plague, famine, and earthquake, and it was a troubled world indeed upon which he looked down from his ten-foot hut on the great hills above Kyōto.

But, though he followed the example of the hermitage, that is not Kenkō's way. There is nothing desperate in his flight from City-Royal. I believe that at first his move was tentative, and that the loveliness of the happy solitudes drew him slowly but surely into the embrace of peace. As I have written of another recluse of Japan :

“ When I first came here it was not my intention to stay long in the forest. As each day dawned I said, ‘ In seven days I go.’ And again : ‘ In seven.’ Yet I have not gone. The days glided by, and here have I attained to look on the beginnings of peace. And wherefore should I go ?—for all life is written in the soul. Shall the fish weary of his pool ? And I who through my blind eyes feel the moon illumining my forest by night and the sun by day, abide in peace, so that even the wild creatures press round to hear my music. I have come by a path overblown by autumn leaves (dead hopes), but I have come.”

There is a note in this which makes one envious as children at school who hear of home, as it does also when a greater and later Japanese than either of the others writes :

"When the solitary autumn draws on, the surroundings of the little thatched hermitage are bedewed and the cobwebs hanging from the eaves are transfigured into garlands of jewels; noiselessly the deeply dyed maple leaves come floating on the water that flows from the bamboo pipes, and the water, thus tinged with rose, seems to stream from the fountain of Tatsuta, where the Brocade-Weaving Princess (she who clothes the woods with russet and crimson) is said to abide. Behind the hermitage the steep peaks rear their heads and the singing crickets are heard among the branches. In front flow rivulets, making a little noise like flutes and drums, and the pools reflect the Moon of Truth. When the moon shines in a pure sky it is as though the darkness of shrouding passion were for ever dissipated. I go down to gather wood in the forest or through the dewy bushes to pick parsley leaves. I often think that so it must have been with the Lord Buddha when he was in search of truth. And thus I sit on the mat of meditation, and in vision I see every truth present to the mind, so that even the call of a deer to its mate helps me to utter the innermost voice of my heart."

Such were the surroundings of Kenkō. As for the book itself, I think it has a charm all its own. That is partly owing to the whimsical method of construction. He planned nothing.

When an idea or memory struck him he jotted it down and stuck it on the walls of his house, relapsing into idleness until the next flash sent another scrap to join the array. It was not until some years after his death that his friend Inagawa Ryoshuin took possession of these papers and formed them into the book, which has become a classic and the delight of all cultured Japanese. Full of wisdom, tender, humorous, ironical, touchingly merciful to all life, lover of bird and animal, lover too of the inherent loveliness in man, his book speaks for him, and survives as a monument of a temper which persists only in Asia, and in Asia also is all but certain to wane before the onslaught of Western civilisation, reckless of what it destroys, ignorant of spiritual values, doomed to learn the lesson of humility through agonies, yet not to be estimated except by the sneers of all the faiths and all the peoples.

Meanwhile, it is good to consider these men who paid so small a price to gain so large a good. Their life cannot and should not be for everyone, yet I think it is a stage through which each must pass in his pilgrimage through lives, and whether it lies behind or in front of us it draws us with a kind of longing to those who glide with noiseless feet through the quiet shadows of the soul and look out upon life with the tranquillity but not the triumph of victors.

And here we see in its beauty the sensitiveness

of the Japanese mind to all the finer shades of emotion and the most delicate and elusive aspects of natural loveliness. Here is found unconscious agreement with the great Greek teaching that the half is greater than the whole, and with Schiller's fine conclusion that the artist is known by what he omits. China and Japan have practised that axiom with a delicacy and precision unknown in the West, and here we may perhaps study the working of this finer instinct, as natural to Kenkō Hōshi as the air he breathed. And it is worth study.

The whole of the *Tsure-zure Gusa* cannot be given here, but as one who has read the whole book, I can say that Mr. Kurata has omitted as little as possible which is likely to interest Western readers.

L. ADAMS BECK.

Note.—The sections here translated are all numbered according to their places in the original text.

INTRODUCTION

BY YOSHIDA KENRŌ

MY life is not one of occupation ; it is a life of leisure. Every day is like the day that went before. My ink-dish lies before me. My heart is like a mirror—all the world is reflected in it. I write as I see, and it may seem strange and mad enough, for I think of strangely mingled things.

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I

EVERYONE is born into the world with great desires, and there are many objects of desire. Very desirable is an Imperial throne, though men might hesitate to reveal their ambition, for it excels the pitch of most mortal men's hopes, and the Imperial family differs from the rest of mankind. The Regent desires to control the young Emperor, the lower officials look with longing eyes upon the regency. No one is satisfied with his position and everyone would choose a higher. Some men will even desire to serve the Great Ones, and their sons and grandsons, though they may be almost destitute, will be envied by others because they will preserve an air of distinction. People of lower rank may gain official positions and plume themselves upon it, but we know and think very little of them.

I suppose a Buddhist monk is the least envied of all people. Sei Shōnagon¹ remarks that the monk is thought about as attractive as a log of dry wood. He may be vocal and dogmatic, but is not attractive to the ordinary man. The

¹ The famous woman writer of the ninth century.

saintly Zōga puts it thus: "He is loaded with responsibility, and must always be influenced by fear of transgressing it." But yet, I consider that one who is a monk at heart may find that life much happier than the layman's.

Everyone, however, naturally desires beauty and an attractive appearance. A charming voice and concise graceful speech are also to be coveted. One may enjoy such a man's company without weariness for many a long day. But to find that one whose appearance promises well is at heart inferior causes a pang of disappointment. Yet it must always be remembered that though appearances are unattractive wisdom may underlie them. The deepest pity is when a good-hearted and attractive man, for want of intellectual interests, sinks in character, makes his inferiors his companions and allows himself to be treated with coarse familiarity.

For my part I would have a man skilled in the great Chinese literature, in graceful composition and in our own Japanese poetry and music. And it is also most desirable to excel in the knowledge of Court ceremonies and of State affairs. Excellent handwriting is a vital necessity. But in all these things there must be no ostentation.

2

The Ancient Emperors had most enlightened political principles, but nowadays our governors

are content to forget these and concern themselves little with the sorrows of those they govern. Officials spend their time and energy on splendid possessions, jewels and equipage. I think Kujō the Regent puts the matter very well in his Injunctions¹: "As to dress and ornaments, carriages and horses and such things, use them if they come to you naturally, but never be fond of them." And I remember that the Emperor Juntoku, writing as to matters of the Court, says: "Food, dress, everything used by an Emperor should be very simple." In my opinion that sentence is worthy indeed.

3

Though a man excels in everything, unless he has been a lover his life is lonely, and he may be likened to a jewelled cup which can contain no wine. He has not known what it is to wander nightly wet with dew or chilled with frost, careless of his father's anger and worldly considerations. He has not known the fever and the sleepless night. Such a man may be interesting, but women do not concern themselves with him, and I believe the consideration of women to be valuable if a man can accept it without its flame of passion.

¹ To his descendants.

4

We should relish this world while keeping the next in mind, and following the Way of the Buddhas. This it is to comprehend true beauty.

5

For my part, if a man drops into the monastic way simply because life has treated him unkindly, I cannot think well of it. I like better those who are glad to choose solitude and to pass their time in such retirement that none seek them any more. Akimoto Chūnagon says excellently well: "Not for crime would I wish to be condemned to solitary exile. But O that I might seek the solitudes to gaze in ecstasy upon the moon!"¹

6

It is really happier for a man, whether of high or low rank, to have no children. Indeed, many great men have desired that their stock should become extinct. Daijō Daijin Yoshifusa declares in an historical book that he would prefer to leave no descendants, and so avoid the disgrace of bad ones. In the Yotsugi no Okina it is related that the famous and saintly Prince Shōtaku said: "Do not make the usual approach to my tomb

¹ The moon is the symbol of the Buddha.

by which posterity should come with the ancestral offerings." He desired to leave none.

7

Man's life indeed is transitory as the dew of Adashi and the smoke of Mount Toribe.¹ But if it were otherwise what a frightful monotony! If life were eternal all interest and anticipation would vanish. It is its uncertainty which lends it fascination. Observe all life, and you will find that man's span probably exceeds the others, and yet it resembles the ephemera which lives but a day. Death lies in wait in the evening. It is a summer cicada which knows not autumn nor winter. There may be pleasure in anticipating a tranquil life of one year, but if it lasted a thousand years that too is but the dream of a night. Where then shall we place the true worth of life?

For myself I marvel to see men desiring to live and live on in possession of immortal old age and ugliness. He who lives long must face many griefs. I incline to believe it well that a man should not outlive the age of forty. On the whole, it is best that that should be his limit. Yet he who passes forty with nothing to regret may possibly retain the affection of his friends and enjoy the prosperity of his descendants, as a sun

¹ Respectively the burial field and the place of burning the dead.

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sinks in a roseate sky. But his interests should never wither nor greed of longer life consume his power of sympathy.

8

Sexual desire is an impulse which leads men into ridiculous situations. Here the nature of man is certainly folly. Sweet perfume is not an attribute of the woman herself, but the man who knows perfectly well that the fragrance comes merely from her scented garments will be madly enamoured by the mere association. Take the case of the saintly hermit Kume, who by his occult power could wing through the clouds like a bird. One day, looking downward, he must needs fix his eyes on a woman trampling her washing in a river with girt-up dress and bare white legs. His supernatural power forsook him and down he toppled. And yet I own it not illogical. Who can deny the sexual attraction of rounded white limbs and a natural bloom !

9

Beautiful hair is a most irresistible charm in women. Character and temper we may detect by a very few low-spoken words, even when the speaker is out of sight. Strange to think what agonies men have suffered from a passion for some woman, and how a woman may lie tossing all

night careless of all else and enduring inconceivable miseries from this passion. Such is the power of love. But the truth is that it is rooted in deep things much beyond our knowledge and its source is far away indeed. There are desires attached to all the six senses, yet all but this one may be conquered. And from this neither the old nor young, the wise or foolish are exempt. A mighty elephant may be bound with a rope made of women's hair, and the deer in autumn can be summoned by the music of a flute made from a clog worn by a woman. A terrible passion indeed, and one with the derelictions of which none should dare to reproach another.

10

I do not deny that this is a transitory world, and that our dwellings are only temporary shelters, but since we have to live here I like to see them furnished with taste. Say a house is to be lived in by a man of refinement. The very moonbeams which enter it absorb more beauty in illuminating his happy and graceful surroundings.

I do not allow of his modernising the fashion of the trees in his garden. No; they must suggest the beauty of age and there must be nothing planned or trained about the grass. It must preserve its natural beauty. The positions of

the veranda and the bamboo fence must also be chosen with consummate taste. The utensils—even the tools—must follow the code of antique simplicity, for by all these things we can be assured that the character of the master is such as deserves respect.

I cannot agree with any ostentatious show of expensive Chinese and Japanese objects wrought with the toil of many makers, nor do I willingly see the trees in the garden distorted into unnatural shapes or the grass disfigured by too much attention. All this fuss is simply irritating. Why be so toilsomely luxurious in a world not permanently our own? And who can promise that these things may not perish in fire and end only as a smoke defiling the sky?

I have heard it related that Gotokudaiji no Otodo had ropes stretched round his sleeping hall to prevent the kites from perching upon it.¹ Saigyō² on seeing this observed, "And may I ask what harm the kites could do if they did alight?" He felt that if a man's heart is not generous and merciful he could desire no more of his company, and so ended his visits to Gotokudaiji. I have myself seen ropes secured to a roof of Prince Ayanokōji's palace. It reminded me instantly of Saigyō's remark. Yet that was a misunderstanding on my part, for when I heard

¹ Kites are ill-omened birds.

² A celebrated poet who was also a monk.

that many crows alit there to devour the frogs in the lake, and that the Prince pitied their sufferings, I respected him. How do we know that Gotokudaiji may not have had quite as worthy a reason?

11

One November day I visited a mountain village, and on the way passed through Kurusuno. Down a distant narrow track overgrown with moss I found a small house—very solitary; sought, it seemed by none; the only visitor water flowing from a bamboo pipe heaped with dead leaves. Yet I believe some mortals shelter there, for in a pail on a shelf were chrysanthemums and a bough or two of rosy maple leaves. I was enjoying what I felt to be the atmosphere of rather refined taste when I espied a large orange tree in the little garden, every branch bowed with fruit. The tree was stiffly fenced in—and somehow this offended my sympathy. Yet on the whole I remember the house with pleasure.¹

12

I grant that it is considered engaging to exchange thoughts with a like-minded friend on the ups and downs of this transient life. But

¹ The fenced tree was a jarring note on the peaceful simplicity.

is the process as easy as it sounds ? To discuss such matters with one whose point of view is the same is virtually to be alone, and since another opinion is valuable for balancing one's own, it is better to differ and at least secure an argument over the difference. But though I would choose an argumentative and combative friend, I hasten to add that I entirely disclaim a pedantic fanatic !

13

But to acquire new and admirable friends among those who have left this transient world—and can there be a greater joy ?—all that is essential can be summed up in a book, a lamp and one's own company. Speaking of books, I should name the choicely good compilation known as *Monzen*, the collection called *Hakushi Bunjū*, the philosophy of Laotze, together with some of the writings of our own countrymen—such as were distinguished scholars of the good old days. All these books are excellent.

14

And how enthralling is the ancient poetry of Japan ! Sung in such numbers we recognise beauty in the lowly life of the peasant mountain-dweller, and even the clumsiness of the furious wild swine is ennobled under the title of “ the

forest-haunting boar." When we discuss present-day poetry I may grant some good fortune to a single line here and there, but apart from that kind of verse-jingling, where (I ask) can be found the subtle spirit lurking in the work of the ancient poets? Consider, for instance, Tsurayuki's phrase—

"More hard to snap than strongly twisted silk
Is my heart's love for thee."

Well, that has been censured as the worst expression to be found in the whole *Kokinshu*, and yet it seems to me that such a one could not easily be achieved in the work of the men of to-day. As a matter of fact, I do not know why that particular verse was singled out for censure, for there are many poems with that kind of turn and choice of words. There was an alternative to it given in the *Genji Monogatari*. In the *Shinkokin* also is a verse which has had to run the gauntlet of censure pretty frequently :

"The desolate pine in its solitude—
Alas ! for its perished friend it pines."

I own this is a conceit and no more, but yet that very verse was welcomed at the Assembly of Poetry, and afterwards received the special approbation of the Emperor, as may be seen in the Day Book of Ienaga.

I have heard the opinion given that the style

of poetry in our own day is unaltered from that of ancient times, and that the same array of words and even of the conventional epithets are still trotted out. So it may be, and yet the new men cannot parallel the poets of old. How simple, how easily comprehended their manner; how pure and profound their matter!

15

When rambling in the country I find much interest in the mountain villages with their little rustic gardens, wild scenery and strange customs. It is amusing how, when it is needed, I send a letter to City-Royal bidding them send me the necessities not to be found here, and adding impressively—"On no account forget!" There is an appealing quaintness about it all. The little possessions I bring with me seem more beautiful in such homely surroundings, and human character or appearance stands out more nobly in these conditions. It is enjoyable also to live in the agreeable simplicity of the temples.

17

To live devoted to the Lord Buddha in the mountain solitudes is never wearisome, and it drives away the clouds from the thoughts, leaving them clear and serene.

18

I insist that a man should be thrifty and repel luxury, but that he should not hoard. Observe how from ancient days downward the wise and princely have eschewed wealth. Example. A happy Chinese named Kyo-Yū had no possessions. When he drank water it was from his cupped hands. An onlooker presented him with a gourd for drinking purposes. What followed? He hung it on a branch for safety, and there it rattled and banged incessantly against the tree. "Too troublesome by far!" he said, and flung it away, and so returned to his old comfortable habit of drinking water from his hands. O how clear and free was his heart! Son-Shin had no covering for his body in the cold winter moonlight but a sheaf of straw which he restacked every morning. This is written in the old Chinese traditions, and they naturally respected such men. But it is a kind of thing we Japanese do not so well understand, and therefore history of this sort with us is not transmitted.

19

How profound is the interest of the revolving pageant of the seasons! Spring, summer, autumn and winter encircle us in turn. The universal feeling is that autumn makes the deepest appeal to sentiment. That is true but, O how

enchanting is the spring when the singing birds return on a warm spring breeze ! How sweet the sunshine ! It is a stirring of spring within us to see the grass thickening beneath the fences on a mild misty day and to watch the early budding of the flowers. Rain and wind follow and disturb our thoughts with pity, until the strengthening leaves break out in green flame upon all the trees.

The perfume of the tachibana blossoms¹ is an ancient tradition and awakens many associations, but surely the delicate fragrance of plum-blossom carries memory most surely into the past and raises it before us. And the purity of the wind-flower, the fragile grace of the slender wistaria—what do they not recall ?

By the time of the Lord Buddha's birthday and that of the Kamo Temple Festival the young leaves cluster strongly, and wistfulness—a sense of tears—stirs in the heart. The drumming song of the water-rail touches some hidden chord of loneliness, though the cottage roofs are gay with iris and the young shoots of the rice-plants are now separated and planted out. In the sixth month the straw fires are lit by the cottages to smoke out the mosquitoes, and the white bottle-gourds blossom in the little yards. And then comes the festival of expelling evil spirits.

I find a peculiar refinement in the Celebration

¹ The name means "the bygone blossoms."

of the Weaver.¹ Now the evenings are chilly and the wild geese fly above us crying *Kari—Kari!* The leaves of the *hagi*² redden underneath. The early rice is harvested, and these are but a few among the many interests of autumn.

All this has been said before and by famous writers, such as Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shōnagon, and such writing is common nowadays. Yet if I see and reflect and do not exhale my thoughts in writing I suffer a mental congestion, and as I have leisure I write. But not for others—so let none venture to protest!

There is a strange fascination in the withered leaves of winter, and in watching their fall at the edge of the brook on a cold morning when the frost rims them with white glitter and the morning mist rises like breath from the stream. I find all this very lovely.

The end of the year is a busy time for everybody. In the sky hangs the half-moon, shedding a cold and remote light, and no one has time to consider its melancholy beauty. Now come the touching and purifying ceremonies of the prayers for remission of sin and the offerings before the Imperial and noble dead. There follow the

¹ That of two stars—lovers—separated by the Milky Way. Once a year one crosses on the wings of a bird and so they meet.

² Bush clover (*lespedeza*).

Shintō services at the Court for the exorcism of evil fortune and disease, and these take place at midnight on the last day of the old year. The ceremony for the welfare of the Imperial family greets the New Year's Day.

On the last day of the old year, when darkness deepens, people run about with torches exchanging loud talk with all and sundry which no one resents. But as dawn ascends the noise ceases, and as the light grows come silence and the ghostly memories of the dead year.

City-Royal remembers no longer the observance of the Mass of Welcome for the dead whose souls are said to flit back to their old homes on the last dying night of the old year, but in the Eastern Country it is still tenderly observed.

The scene that New Year's Day-dawn reveals is the same as yesterday—yet how different! It is a new year beginning. The streets are gay and decorated with pine-trees set up before the houses. Every face wears a smile of hope.

21

Who can remember grief when he sits absorbed in the beauty of the moon? One man says it refines the inmost spirit. Another asserts that the sight of dew upon the grass is still more moving. To my thinking this difference of opinion is absurd. Things strike different chords in different minds,

and seize, as it were, upon different occasions for their effect. But certain things have always a deeply emotional appeal, such as the moon and certain blossoms, the wind and waterfalls beaten into foam among the rocks. There is a Chinese poem :

"Day and night the Gen and the Shō
Flow eastward unresting.
How should they stop for grief in the souls of those about
them ?"¹

These words awaken tenderness in my soul that distracts it from other reflections. Koikō, the Chinese poet, rejoiced to climb the mountains and wander by their streams. He received strange joy from the mute companionship of fish and birds. I too have experienced that joy of roaming in the haunts of deep grass and in the happy solitudes.

24

Strangely pure and moving is it that the Virgin Princess should dwell in the holy shrine of Ise, in the heart of the desolate moorland. She may not use the Buddhist words "Kyo" and "Hotoke."² No, she must substitute the (Shintō) terms "Somegami" and "Nakago."³

¹ The poem of a Chinese exile who longed to follow the rivers.

² For the Buddhist Scriptures and the Buddha.

³ The Shintō sacred books and the Spirit.

Most spiritually lovely is a Shintō shrine. If there were only the invariable prospect of its grouping of noble trees it would be enough to evoke wonder and delight. But when one adds the guarding palisade and the cleyera trees adorned with sacred papers, it is beautiful indeed. Let me name such shrines as Ise, Kamo, Kasuga, Hirano and others.

25

The shoals of the Asuka river shift every year. So also change the conditions of men's lives. Time passes. Events fall behind us and fade. Pleasure and sorrow succeed each other. The garden of prosperity becomes a wilderness. The house remains, but the masters flit through it and change. Since the peach-tree and plum-tree are silent in the garden, with whom shall we commune and recall the ancient days? I long to hold conference with the noble people of old but, alas! themselves, their houses, and even their tombs have passed away.

I have seen the remains of the palace of the Fujiwara¹ and the temple of Michinaga, and true it is that such ruins stir the heart to its depths. Michinaga built them in beauty and endowed them with great lands. True, his pride led him to believe that his own family would keep

¹ The mighty family which for so long ruled Japan.

the Imperial family in tutelage for ever, and, believing as he did that its power would be unchanging, little could he foresee its decay! The great gate and the lesser hall remained until near our own time, but in the Shōwa era the great gate was burned, and the golden temple, though it escaped the flames, fell into ruin and was never repaired.

The Temple Muryōjiu exists as it was, built. Nine images of the Buddha, fifteen feet in height, stand full of majesty in a row. The votive tablet, written by the famous hand of Kōzei Dainagon, and the door panels, painted by Kaneyuki, still exist, and I have seen the Hokke Hall, but who can say for how long they will remain? These wonders will vanish like the rest. The foundations of great buildings are here and there visible and others have left not so much as a memory.

26

Blossoms are scattered by the wind and the wind cares nothing, but the blossoms of the heart no wind can touch, and when a friend has left us for another country and is no more seen, his beloved presence still lives in memory. Bitter is the sorrow of the divided paths, though such is the inevitable way of the world. Bitter indeed as death itself! The hue of life changes

38 THE HARVEST OF LEISURE

like a dyed fabric, and it merges in darkness when our ways lie apart. We find a song of haunting melancholy by Horikawa the Emperor among his "Hundred Verses." It says :

"Long, long since I saw the building of my beloved's house.
Now it is desolate.
The roof and the fence have fallen, and only the violets
Still blossom in deep grass."

The singer's own desolation breathes through it.

27

The Ritual of an Emperor's abdication consists in the relinquishment of the Three Jewels, the Divine Sword, the Divine Mirror and the Jewel. The winter after the abdication of the Emperor Hanazono he wrote these lines :

"The servants, the pomp, have vanished, and I am no more
courted.
Forgotten and lonely my palace, for all are seeking the new
one.
Unswept the flowers lie in the sad untended garden."

People are too busy with the new to trouble themselves with the old. It is a glimpse into the hearts of men.

28

The year of an Imperial national mourning is a desolation. It disturbs one's wonted being to

see the changes—the dais lowered, the delicate bamboo blinds exchanged for those of common reed, with coarse cloth borders, and the differences in Court dress, even to the swords and adornments. This is truly impressive.

29

When in silence we recall old days, the heart longs for them with eagerness hard to be borne. In the long nights of autumn, when all the world is asleep, I love to get out my old papers and to destroy them, for I am not willing that any letters should survive me. And when I see among them the letters or pictures of dead friends, I have the strangest feeling that they are still living and playing their parts—for strong indeed is the memory of the long-ago days when these things were written, and the subjects they recall. So also when I find little possessions which once belonged to these friends, the possessions themselves unchanged, it awakens a most poignant sorrow.

30

There is nothing more terrible than the recent death of one beloved. During the forty-nine days of ritual observance and the retreat to a mountain temple with other mourners, every fibre of emotion is wrung when in these narrow

and solitary surroundings are celebrated the masses for the dead. Yet those days glide swiftly away and, on the last, desolation is again our portion as we collect our belongings and disperse silently on our several ways to return to the saddened house.

We do not willingly forget the beloved, but days go by and, as says the proverb, "Those departed become strangers and remote." The shock subsides. We must laugh and be trivial. The body is buried on a lonely and far-off mountain, and is visited only on ritual days. Before long the sotoba¹ is overgrown with moss and heaped with dead leaves, and the only faithful visitors are the night-wind and the moon. Though for the newly dead many sorrow, who values the long departed? Posterity for awhile may know the name of the ancestor, for that is a handed-down tradition, but what grief can they feel? No longer are offerings made or any services of remembrance held, and gradually the name itself is forgotten and none know who lies in the nameless grave. The grass in spring overgrowing it may rouse some emotion. It may be sad to hear that the ancient pine-tree of a thousand years has fallen in a great storm and is now cut up for firewood. And then the ancient graveyard becomes a ploughed field, and its place knows it no more. Such is the pity of things!

¹ Buddhist memorial.

31

One morning, when the snow was falling exquisitely, a man I know sent a letter to a woman, alluding to it. In her reply she made no reference to this lovely marvel. The man told me later that he could feel no further sympathy with one so callous to beauty. This strikes me as humorous, and the matter was impressed upon me by the fact that the lady herself soon after vanished like the snow.

35

A man who is a friendly correspondent should write without diffidence whatever his handwriting may be. I could never think well of one who would have his letters written for him by another simply because he is ashamed of a lack of elegance in his own handwriting.¹

36

A man who had grown a little careless in visiting the lady of his affections had reached the stage when he was really afraid to venture there again. He was pondering with much anxiety the question of how he could express regret and win forgiveness.

¹ At the time of Kenkō Hōshi, and up to the present time, very great importance was attached to calligraphy, and it is still valued.

Imagine his pleasure when a charming letter reached him. How fully it showed her understanding of the situation !

" May I trouble you to lend me a servant for awhile ? I have been so terribly busy with household matters and need a little help."

Someone remarked : " Now here we have perfect tact. Adorable creature ! " And to this I heartily subscribe.

38

Those men who are mastered by the greed for riches or fame reap their reward in troubled spirits and the absolute destruction of peace. What folly ! Such a rich man is too poor to buy peace, and his gold heaped to the height of the Great Bear will but vex himself and his heirs. Carriages, fat horses, jewels and glitter, what are these but the contempt of the wise !

Fling away the loads of gold in the mountains, hurl the jewels into the abyss. Frantic is the folly of him whose all is staked on such fripperies. As to rank—is it so needful to leave a great name to the world ? A man of rank is often far enough from real nobility, and a fool of no accomplishments may easily rise in the world if he has the backing of family influence. And observe how lightly Mencius and Confucius held by position and died reckless of the world's valuations.

With what passion the average man esteems great reputation !—and yet he who censures, and he who blames, alike vanish quickly into forgetfulness. Then is it not also folly to desire posthumous fame ? Those who do so are but the slaves of transitory opinion.

This brings us to the question of those who pursue knowledge with avidity. Now, knowledge is gleaned from others or learned from books. That is not wisdom. Then what is wisdom ? For, carried into the sphere of absolute truth, right and wrong are the same. And how then shall righteousness be defined ? Alas ! True wisdom is born in a man and dies with him. It cannot be transmitted, and the truly wise man can neither be classed with the virtuous nor claimed by the foolish. He stands outside all classification of wisdom or folly or hoarding or spending. So therefore the man who pursues the gauds of fame and fortune walks in illusion. These things have no real existence—then wherefore should we desire them ?

Spring was passing away with a tranquilly lovely sky, and seeing an attractive house embowered in ancient trees, how could it be possible that I should not enter to muse upon the garden drifted over with dying flowers ? And when I

entered, the trellised shutters drawn over the southern windows spoke of desertion and emptiness. However, as I approached the eastern front I saw a door ajar, and through a dropping shade of split bamboo was revealed a man with a book lying before him upon a table. He had the air of well-bred serenity and assurance, and appeared to be about twenty years old. Who on earth could it be? I would have given more than a little to solve that problem.

44

I saw a youth come out from a humble-looking bamboo gate. By the uncertain moonlight I observed that he wore a handsomely coloured cloak and full trousers, and appeared to be of noble rank. He was followed by a little serving-boy, and he walked a long way into the rice-fields, wetting his fine clothes with the heavy dew and playing most skilfully upon the flute. It occurred to me how little the peasants would understand that charming melody—and resolving to find out where he went I watched. He came to a temple at the foot of the ascent and went in. I now saw a carriage supported on a carriage prop, looking far more noticeable than it would have done in the Capital, and this gave me occasion to ask the servant who our visitor might be. The answer was that a prince was expected to attend some

holy rite. Many monks were standing before the temple in the cold night breeze, and perfumed ladies passed on their way from the veranda to the rooms where they would pass the night—wrapping their cloaks about them, and careful to shelter themselves from the wind exactly as they do in City-Royal. The autumn grass in the garden was growing and was heavy with dew. Many cicadas were chirping, and the sound of the water running from the bamboo pipe had a wonderful delicacy. I thought the clouds drifted more swiftly in the sky above the village than at City-Royal, and that the moon changed more swiftly from light to gloom.

45

Ryōkaku Sōjō was an extremely bad and violent man and monk. Beside his temple stood a great Chinese nettle-tree, and the people¹ nicknamed him Bishop Nettle. He was furious at what he considered the insult, and had the tree cut down. The stump, however, was left, and now they called him Bishop Stump. More furious still, he had the stump dug out, and there remained a great hollow. Not to be outdone, they then nicknamed him Bishop Hollow.

¹ Disliking him.

46

Once upon a time there was a priest who went by the name of the Very Reverend Cutpurse. Happily I may add it was bestowed because the unfortunate man had had the bad luck of being so often called upon to stand and deliver when the gentlemen of the road were about their business.

47

There was a pilgrim to the temple of Kyomidzu, who on his way fell into the company of an ancient nun. All the time she was stepping along she was murmuring to herself, "Kusame, kusame."¹ At last he demanded: "Why, your Reverence, does your ladyship continue to repeat, 'A sneeze, a sneeze'?" No answer, but the steady repetition. He tried again and yet again, until her temper getting the better of her, she rapped out: "Don't you know it's commonly said that if anyone starts sneezing it may carry them off unless someone has the good feeling to say 'kusame.' Well, I happen to be nurse to a young gentleman living on Mount Hiei, and I make a practice of repeating this all the time, for who knows but that he may be sneezing at this very moment."

Now must we not own that here was a fine pitch of excellence?

¹ A sneeze, a sneeze!

49

"It is not well to stay for age in travelling the Way.
Do not the graves of early youth cry loud against delay?"

Ah, it is when unheralded sickness grips a man and the world forsakes him that he begins to taste the pangs of unavailing regret for the irretrievable. Regret! The mildest form it can assume is remorse for the misspent moments of the past: the doubt instead of decided action, the foolish hurry in place of wise delay. But when the end is at hand how useless is regret!

Written in the *Zenrin no Ju-in* you may read the story of a long-dead sage. When people pressed upon him for his counsel in important affairs of their own and of other peoples' he habitually replied: "But I myself am plunged even now into anxiety respecting an important transaction. At this very instant it may turn into frightful urgency," and so saying he would turn a deaf ear and immerse himself in meditation. Thus he gained heaven.

And let me also cite Shintai, another wise man. He, having fully realised the fleeting nature of human existence, thought every day not too long to be spent in the posture and practice of unceasing inward prayer.

52

There was a monk of the Ninna Temple who had never visited the Clean Stone Water Temple. He became very old, and felt a great desire to accomplish that pilgrimage. So off he set by himself. He paid his devotions at the Paradise Temple and the Kora Temple, both of which are branches of the Clean Stone Water Temple, but went no farther, believing these to be the temple itself. Back he came well satisfied, and meeting a friend said to him that the Clean Stone Water Temple was even more majestic than he had expected. "And," he continued, "I saw streams of people going on and up the mountain, and wondering what the attraction could be, I wanted to go up and see for myself. But obviously I couldn't manage that, for I had already visited the Clean Stone Water Temple."¹ The obvious moral of this is—don't be too proud to ask for guidance when you don't exactly know where you are going.

53

There is another amusing story of a monk at Ninna Temple. Some boy was to be ordained, and the occasion was celebrated with a good deal

¹ It was not etiquette to visit a mere sight or amusement after visiting a temple.

of drink and merrymaking. In the excitement one of them crammed a kettle over his head right down to his throat, and he danced ridiculously with the kettle for a headpiece. The time came when he wanted to be rid of his head-dress. Not a bit of it! He could not get it off for all his struggles. This sobered the party, and they stood frightened and perplexed, for in his struggles he had wounded his neck badly. They expected to see him choke before their eyes, and frantically tried to beat the kettle to bits, but the noise half killed him. In the utmost dismay they hung a garment over the threc-legged kettle, gave him his staff, and brought him up to a doctor at Kyōto, leading him as you lead a blind man. Can you imagine how people stood and stared at the kettle-headed man, and his gay appearance as he stood before the doctor! He tried to speak, but it was only a confused hollow murmur.

The doctor said it was an entirely novel case, and he really could find no precedent or instructions for dealing with it in any books or lectures that he remembered, and so saying he despatched the party back to the temple. There they laid him on his bed, while his mother and friends stood about him lamenting his pitiful fate and the kettle appeared unmoved by their lamentations. A bystander thoughtfully suggested that the kettle should be dragged off by force, and his life saved, even though the loss of his ears and

nose might be the price. They therefore pushed in some straw to soften the edges, and then dragged at the kettle with such violence that he thought his head was going with it. Finally off came the kettle, terribly wounding his ears and nose. He had to keep his bed for many a long day, but what was that when he got off with his life ?

58

He little knows the world who says that a man can live in whatever manner he wishes, and that at home and in the usual social relations he can lead the religious life adequately. I cannot think this is so. We monks, unlike ordinary people, desire to live so that we may transmit the Unchanging Law of Changes, and how is this to be done if we are to serve the Emperor or to be troubled with family concerns ? It is for us to cling to the Unchanging, and having resolved to follow the Buddha we must also follow the quiet life. Yet if we live in the mountains we must defend ourselves from cold and hunger. So, while I declare that the return to epicureanism and fine clothes kindles the flame of worldly desire and renders the religious life impossible, I cannot agree with the extreme view that the monk's life must be wholly desireless. Surely he also must have his desires, though very unlike

those of the impassioned worldling. It must be permitted to him to desire his humble bed, his poor clothing, his one bowl of food, his vegetable soup, and these frugal desires are soon satisfied. As to his inward life, if he is free from false shame and pays reverent attention to his rule, he will soon learn to distinguish the right from the wrong in this matter. But being mortal and longing for enlightenment, we monks must certainly surrender the world, for if we lead the ordinary life we shall soon be overcome by passionate desires, and so far from attaining the wisdom of the Buddhas we shall sink into the ignorance of animals.

59

If a man should desire the Great Adventure, he cannot have it both ways, nor can he succeed also in the beloved affairs of this world. Difficult as it may be to bid farewell to Mammon, he should ruthlessly set it aside. But he argues far otherwise. "Such and such a thing must be attended to, or people will certainly laugh at me. When I consider the years I have spent in arranging such matters it would be sheer weakness to fly off to some new notion in such hot haste."

Well, that is his point of view, but if he accepts it the world strengthens its bonds, and pre-occupations crowd in upon him in endless proces-

sion, and the moment of relinquishment will never arrive. Surveying the mass of humanity it may well be said that this is the life generally lived by such weaklings.

But yet—if the nearest house is ablaze, who says, “I can take it easy for awhile yet”? Ah, no! He flings away his wealth—all, anything, to save his life, and what thought of ridicule has he as he flees headlong from danger? I ask this—Does Death time his arrival to suit your pleasure? Death in his swift attack is more ruthless than the pursuing rush of flame or wave. And in that fearful moment he must abandon all—his aged parents, his little children, the consideration of the great, the friendship of man, however bitter the parting.

60

A priest of high rank in the Niin Temple, by the name of Jōshin, had a big reputation for wisdom and a big appetite into the bargain for sweet potatoes. He simply gorged them. He must have a bowl at his elbow while he preached, and his discourse was punctuated with potatoes. When this resulted in illness his cure was rest for a week or fortnight and more sweet potatoes. He gorged more diligently than ever, and that was his remedy for every ill. Never a one did he pass on to others. He devoured them all himself.

He had not a sen to bless himself with, but his old father in religion left him a solid little legacy amounting to perhaps a hundred and forty yen and a small shrine. At once he put the shrine on the market, and immediately lumped the whole sum of money and placed nearly all of it in the hands of a man living in Kyōto. This was to be regarded as sweet-potato money, and whenever he drew a little cash it was invested in sweet potatoes and nothing else. With this continuous nibbling at the fund it soon disappeared, and people said to each other, "When a man as poor as he was spends his money in such a way he must have the very root of religion in him."

He met another priest once and called him "Shiro urari." A man asked at once: "Bless me! What's that?" He retorted: "Ask me something else. I don't know myself. I only know that if there's such a thing anywhere, it's the living image of this priest." (It was as near as he could go to telling the other priest that his was the peculiarly expressionless beauty of a large smooth white melon.)

He himself was a handsome, well-set-up, strong man, and certainly one who looked after his stomach, but he also shone in calligraphy and as a scholar and man of eloquent speech. So that he adorned his sect, and his parish thought there was none to compare with him. Yet, with all this, not a jot did he care for the world

and his wife and their opinion. He followed his own and had no use for any other.

For instance, if he consented to eat on one of his parochial visits, he never dreamed of delaying until anyone else was helped to food. Put the bowl before him and he began to gobble, and the moment it was empty he was off and away. My own belief is that he had no regular hours for meals such as other men cling to. Hungry, he ate, and cared not a hang whether it were midnight or sunrise. If he happened to be sleepy at mid-day he went to bed, no matter what was going on about him or the comments of those who were present. And if he happened to be sleepless at night, up he got and walked about, whistling light-heartedly. But the odd thing is that, in spite of all these oddities, nobody disliked him, and all his queer ways were taken for granted.

Should we not admit that this was because the driving power behind it all was unusual force of character ?

66

Once upon a time Okamoto, then Regent, called the keeper of his hawks and told him to prepare a brace of game-birds for a complimentary present. They were to be bound to a bough of red-blossomed plum. The man replied without hesitation :

“ My lord, I regret that I could not possibly

bind game-birds to a branch in flower, and it would be an unheard-of thing to hang them from one bough."

The steward was then called into conference, and several other persons of light and leading, and finally another order was given to the man : " Act according to your own conviction."

He at once suspended one bird only from a branch on which there was not a single flower. And this was the way in which he explained it :

" A game-bird must only be bound to the branch of a bush, or possibly a plum-bough *may* be allowable if it has only buds or scarcely opened flowers. Or a branch of pine. The branch must be cut about seventy inches long, and this must only be done with a sword. Then let the branch be trimmed very slightly at the end and the bird secured in the middle. It must hang from a stout twig, and it is essential that the claws should rest on another. It must be bound only with the fibres of wistaria, and these are to be exactly as long as the very longest feather of the wing, and the fibres must be securely twisted after the pattern of a cow's horn. Then, on the first morning after the first fall of snow has whitened the earth, the messenger must set forth. This must be from the side-door and with the utmost ceremony, and let him be sure to walk only upon the stepping-stones on the path and to leave no foot-mark on the snow.

Arrived, and scattering some down from the back of the bird, he is to prop the branch against the veranda of the twin-peaked mansion. Suppose a gift in the shape of a garment is presented to him in return for his trouble, he will do rightly in throwing it about his shoulders, and then let him depart with a profound bow. But, observe : that if the snow be deep enough to cover the ties of his geta he must not start, even though it be the first snow as required."

He finished by saying : "The reason for plucking and strewing a little down from the bird's back is to intimate that it was killed by a hawk, for it is the habit of hawks to attack the back."

For myself, I own I can see no reason against using a flowering bough. In the *Ise Monogatari* it says that in the autumn a pheasant was sent ceremonially attached to a bough of artificial plum-blossom, and this verse went with it :

"This is not flower-time.

Yet have I gathered flowers for my friend."

The Saint of Shosha had become possessed of supernatural power by studying the Scriptures day and night. He was in the habit of travelling about, and once took shelter in a wayside inn, where he observed a fire of bean-stalks over which boiled a pot of beans. Hearing a com-

plaining murmur from the beans, he listened to the sound which gradually shaped itself into words. They said: "The Bean-stalks are our parents, and yet by making this cruel heat they torture us most pitilessly!"

The Bean-stalks replied:

"Yes—and how do you suppose *we* like to be burnt? Pray do stop complaining! It is your sympathy we deserve in our own anguish!"

71

I always think, when I hear a man's name mentioned, that I have some sort of an idea of what he should look like, but when I meet him I invariably find a very different being from what I imagined. And in hearing an old story I must needs imagine the house and situation as if it were somewhere within reach and construct the people of the story on the model of those I have known. This is my habit, but I do not know how it is with others. When people speak, what I hear, what I think, often seems to me to be something that has happened before, a long time ago, and is not to be placed exactly. I wonder if this is a common experience?

72

In the overabundance of certain things I find vulgarity. Thus I object to an overcrowding of

furniture in the sitting-room, to a whole bunch of writing-brushes beside the ink-slab, too many images of the Buddha in the chapel, too great a profusion of stones, trees and grass in a garden, too many children in a house, too many words to a friend, too verbose dedications of sacred offerings. Things that I feel can never be overdone are books in the book receptacles and rubbish on the rubbish heap !

74

The peoples of the world, what are they better than ants hurrying east and west, north and south ? Nobles, some. Plebeians, others—old and young, hastening to other places, rushing homewards. Sleeping at night, rising in the morning. And why ? What are they doing ? In the urge of life they are seeking incessantly for gain. What future are they pursuing ?

Old age and death await them. What else ? These come hastening on and cannot be arrested. And with this certainty what pleasure has the world to offer ? Yet the average man has no time to dread this inevitable law of life, for he is submerged in the desire of wealth and fame, and has no interest in reflecting upon the short span that is allotted to them. And the only ones who grieve at it are the fools in their folly, and they because the world's impermanence galls

them and they have no understanding of the Law of Change.

75

What sort of creatures are they who find life tedious ? I cannot understand the drift of such thoughts. Well indeed is the life of him who lives in solitude ! If we live according to the world's measure our hearts move to the rhythm of wealth and reputation. If we must have friendly social relations, how can we insist upon truths which would offend those we meet ? We must jest, argue, quarrel, be merry and always amid uncertain conditions. The thoughts flit hither and thither, advantage and disadvantage appear and disappear. A drunkard's dream, inebriate and inebriating, a noisy activity stupefying and lapsing into dullness as age creeps on. And in this all ends.

True pleasure lies in extricating oneself from this sort of business, in forsaking human relations, and laying worldly affairs aside. Even if the absolute truth of the Universe be too high for understanding, much peace and content can thus be attained. The Maka Shikwan¹ thus exhorts us to sever our connection with the agitation of human affairs, accomplishments and idle knowledge.

¹ A Buddhist scripture.

81

Unskilful pictures in the alcove or upon the sliding doors are not only repellent in themselves but disclose the vulgarity of their possessor's mind. Let a man have the plainest of furniture—to that I take no exception—but it must all be arranged according to its shape and use, and it must not be overloaded with senseless decoration nor must it be allowed to be in ill-condition.

Furniture which is old-fashioned, not ostentatiously costly, and of excellent good quality should always be chosen.

82

Some will not bind books in silk because it wears ill, but Tona says, "Thin silk slightly frayed at the top and bottom and mother-of-pearl picture rollers with the shell cracked are the most pleasing." I like this idea. There are some who go so far as to say it affects them disagreeably to see a single volume not bound to match the set. But it was Kōyū Sozu who remarked that it is only the man of ill-developed æsthetic taste who must have symmetry. Things are the more beautiful because of a-symmetry. I think this a very high saying.

No—things must be neither perfected nor completed. There is far more interest in those which

are left incomplete. Thus it has been said that when the Imperial Palace is built, it is the custom to leave some part of it unfinished. And it pleases me to find among books written by the ancient sages of China and Japan passages purposely left inconclusive and incomplete.

85

Pray never run the risk of imitating a fool! If you rage along the street in imitation of a madman you are a madman—neither more nor less. Suppose you slay a man after the fashion of a criminal—you are a villain. (And what is the moral?) If a horse can imitate the supernatural horse of legend who runs a thousand *ri* in one day, why then he is supernatural! And if an emperor imitates Shun (the wisest of Chinese rulers), he is a Shun. He who pretends wisdom is not far from being a wise man.

89

A story was spread about by some man or other that in the high recesses of the mountains might be found cats with two tails who fed upon human flesh. Another decorated the story with the embellishment that these cats are sometimes found in ordinary places and that some house-cats on growing old can become two-tailers.

Well—a monk who lived in Gyōgan Temple and amused himself by writing *renka*,¹ heard of these marvellous cats, and felt that care would be necessary when alone in the dark. It came about that he had to walk home alone one night from a party, where he had been busy composing *renka* with his friends. He reached a stream, and there one of these vampire cats flung itself upon him and attacked his throat. Faint with terror and shock he straightway collapsed into the water shrieking—"Save—save me from the vampire cat!" Torch in hand, several men rushed to the spot, dragged him out and asked what on earth had happened. The fan and box in his sleeve which had been his prizes in the *renka* contest were soaked with water, but what did that matter now that his life was saved? Still, he wended his way homeward with a sadly disgruntled aspect, for the cat was no other than his faithful dog who, seeing him in the dark, leaped upon him in welcome!

92

There was a man who, beginning to learn archery, faced the target with two arrows. His teacher immediately said: "A beginner must not indulge himself with two arrows at a time, for

¹ Short, five-lined poems of which the first three lines are written by one person and the last two by another.

if he does he will be careless with the first from trusting to the second. He must concentrate upon the one arrow."

Two arrows only! How should it occur to him that he could neglect either under the eye of his teacher! Yet it had occurred to his teacher. Now, this illustration is of universal application.

A learner, in his anxiety, will at night remember the morning and vice versa. Thus he is always working with his eyes fixed on something as yet non-existent. He cannot realise the risk of a moment's negligencé. Hard indeed is the effort of concentration!

97

There are many parasitic things in the world which destroy the objects upon which they batten. Such are vermin about the body, mice in the house, traitors to the country, wealth to an avaricious man, earthly desires to the spiritual man, religious dogma and ceremonies to the monk.

98

I have been reading a book named *Ichigen Hōdan*, in which the reflections of a wise man are recorded. Here are a few excerpts very much to my taste.

"Leave undone whatever you hesitate to do."

"He whose heart is engrossed in things spiritual should not hoard so much as a jar of

rice-husks and salt. But let him remember that a well-written copy of a Scripture and a beautiful image of the Buddha are equally dangerous possessions."

"A hermit should always manage his house-keeping carefully lest he should come to want."

"A man of high birth should have the humility of a man of low position. A wise man should not display his book learning. A wealthy man's tastes should be as simple as a poor man's. A skilful man must in no case be arrogant."

"The first principle of true service to the Buddha is to divorce the mind from all earthly considerations and never to recur to them."

I have forgotten the rest.

104

Twilight was deepening. A man of high rank secretly visited a solitary house, where a woman was living alone for sufficient reasons. A dog ran out barking loudly. A waiting-maid followed and asked his name. He was ushered in. So solitary—so desolate the house that it was difficult to imagine how any woman could content herself there.

He stood awhile waiting and a young voice, said with shy sweetness, "Please come in," and hearing this he passed through the little side-door. The room was not furnished with the dis-

comfort to be expected. It had even a touch of refinement. In one corner a fire flickered and a delicate perfume of incense, which had been burnt lately filled the air. The maids were heard to say :

"Now let the outer gate be locked. It looks like rain. Leave the carriage near the gate. The servants can find shelter there. These are our lady's orders." And his servants said among themselves, "We may turn in and sleep soundly to-night."

Though none of these words were spoken loudly, the speakers were so near that they reached the master.

Those two talked on and on far into the long night, later or earlier, until cockcrow came loud and clear.

"But is it dawn already ? " he asked, and she answered evasively :

"You need not go before day," and he lingered and lingered hesitating, speaking words dedicated to the past and future. The summons of the cockcrow came oftener. At last, when the sunbeams broke into the room he left, uttering some words of touching sadness. It was a fair April morning, and the garden shone with young green inexpressibly beautiful. That man, recalling the moment, can never forget a blossoming tree on which his eyes were fixed until it faded from sight.

105

The snow which has lain a long time remains still on the northern side of the house ; it is frozen hard indeed. A carriage is in sight, its pole covered with glittering rime. It is dawn, but the moon still gives light—a light more mysterious than daylight, obscured by a little temple and its trees, and in this haze of meeting lights, hidden from all eyes by the building, a man of high rank sits with a woman on the veranda by the temple railings. Their talk is earnest and very low. How should I know what they say ? Her head droops a little—a sight of beauty. Through the air an indescribable sweetness—a frail perfume comes drifting to me. I hear some broken words. A poem lived—not written.

107

When a woman is ready enough to accost a man, it is seldom he is prepared with an apposite reply. It happened one day that when the Emperor Kameyama had abdicated, some very modern young women-in-waiting had a trick of putting the young men who came to court out of countenance by asking : “ And, pray, have you heard the cuckoo yet ? ” One of the Dainagon stammered out : “ It could never be supposed that a nobody like my poor self should have

heard it." Horikawa Nai-daijin Dono, on the contrary, replied simply and at once : " Certainly. I believe I heard it at Iwakura."

The women commented : " Not at all a bad answer. ' A nobody like my poor self ' is altogether contemptible."

No question all men should be so instructed that it becomes impossible a woman should have the laugh of a man. It is well said : " The last Regent who dwelt at the Jodo monastery was universally admired as a paragon of the most distinguished manner of speaking, and this was the result of his having been trained in boyhood by Anki Mon In. While, on the other hand, Yamashina no Sadaïjin Dono acknowledged that, " If I meet so much as a kitchen girl, I am as shy as the veriest hobbledehoy."

It should, however, be remembered that if the world were rid of women men would soon be rid of their manners and would never give a thought to their garments, their head-gear or anything of the sort. Now one may well say women ought themselves to be perfection if they can reduce a man to this abject condition. Not a bit of it ! Not one of them but is naturally as obstinate and contradictory as she can be. Vain, selfish and blandly uninformed in ethics, they are the pictures of caprice, snatching blindly at whatever happens to strike their imagination. If you need an answer, not a word will you get out of them if

you ask the plainest question in the words best chosen to suit their ignorance, whereas, with the air of honest endeavour, they will let loose a flow of perfect nonsense when nobody is noticing them. They exist in the belief that their cunning tricks and plots are quite beyond masculine comprehension, but have not the wits to prevent some trifle giving them away. Awkward and insincere creatures—of what small consequence is their censure !

Why, then, may we ask—Have they the power to shame us ? I can only say that if the ideal woman exists anywhere what I have written does not fit her, for she must be one of Nature's aberrations. However, if only love is in question, and a man runs headlong after her, he will find such charms as he expects.

A man who from his skill had received the nickname of The Skilful Tree Climber, ordered another to climb a tall tree and trim the topmost boughs. While he was at this anxious height The Skilful Tree Climber was silent, but when the other was on his way down and had reached the roof he called out : " Now take it easy ! Be careful ! Go cautiously." Hearing this, I said immediately : " Why, any man can simply jump from that roof if he wishes ! Why exhort him

now ? ” “ The very reason why I do ! ” he answered. “ That fellow knew very well he was in danger at the tree-top and went as cautiously as a cat. I had no need to speak. It’s when a man thinks he’s safe that he’s apt to get careless.” Now, this was an ignorant sort of person, but I think his saying has the worth of a precept. They tell me that a skilled ball-player who has done marvels of skill in kicking off in a difficult situation will often make a fool of himself where a beginner would succeed.

112

Supposing a man is starting to-morrow for a very far away land, surely it would be misplaced to lecture him on the subject of the things which pertain to leisured quiet. And in the same way he who is engaged in anxious business or with the funeral rites of one beloved cannot be expected to show interest in the health and concerns of others. He will certainly not be blamed for this. It is a matter of course. And this truth should apply also to the stage when we are all in the same plight, when old age and decrepitude seize us, and when we should bid farewell to all worldly cares without rebuke from any.

But if we follow the usual way of living, we shall still be the prey of desires and attachments. What time shall we have for leisurely thinking ?

What shall we not miss ? Time will be frittered away in endless nothings.

Life draws near its close, but the way of peace is still distant, though sunset is in the sky. Surely it is then high time to sever all the relations of life, to abandon those loyalties and to trouble no longer about etiquettes. No doubt we shall be censured as cruel, people will call us mad, deluded, what not ! But need we care for such critics—they who understand nothing of the truth ? For my own part it troubles me not at all when they slander me, and I am deaf to their praise.

113

A man past forty who is still the slave of sensual passion is an unpleasant spectacle. If he conceals any outward exhibition of his tendency, he is not so intolerable, but who does not feel disgust if he speaks wantonly and carelessly or enjoys the details of the amours of others ?

It is revolting to hear and see an old man intruding himself among young folk and acting the fool to make them laugh. Revolting also when a low-born vulgar individual tries to speak familiarly of those above him in station, and this to convey the impression that they are his friends. And it repels all sympathy when a poor man makes an ambitious and ostentatious display in entertaining his guests.

115

At Shukukawara collected a crowd of wandering monks for a service to Amida. In came yet another to the temple, calling out: "Is there a monk here named Iroöshi?"

Up got another, saying: "I am Iroöshi, and who may you be?"

He answered:

"My name is Shirabonji. They tell me my teacher has been killed in the Eastern Country by a wandering monk called Iroöshi, so I have looked you up that I may avenge his murder."

Iroöshi answered:

"Well and good! That is the truth. It happened some years ago. But though I will fight you we must not defile the temple. In front of it is a dry river-bed. That is the place for us. And now, friends, look here! Don't make trouble for yourselves by helping either of us, and on no account let us disturb the service."

Out they went accordingly. They fought and stabbed each other to death.

In old times this type of wandering monk did not exist. They resemble recluses, but are very egoistic. They also resemble devout Buddhist monks, but are all for quarrels and fights. I detest their ways and manners—but one thing I relish in them. They care not a snap

for death and have no attachment to life. And that is why I tell the story.

118

When fish-soup made of carp is served, they say the hair of those who eat it remains stiffly in order all day. Now as glue is made from carp bones, it may be that carp are glutinous in substance. Carp are the only fish which may be cooked in the Imperial presence, therefore they can be classed as fish of distinction. Of birds the pheasant takes the highest rank, and therefore pheasants and mushrooms may hang in the dining apartment of the Palace. No other thing of the sort should appear there.

Some wild geese were once hung on the raised shelf of the dining hall in the Palace of the Empress. Niudō Dono of Kitayama, who saw this sight, wrote from his retreat to Her Majesty saying that he had never beheld things of the kind in their natural state in such a place, and it could be considered a lamentable error, and one to be attributed probably to the fact that no instructed person was on the spot.

120

Chinese medicines are excellent, and certainly we can do without anything Chinese except these medicines. Chinese books run about all over

Japan, and are there for the copying if we want them. And really, when one considers the dangerous transit between this country and China, one asks why load the Chinese ships with so many needless trumperies? In our old books we are taught that it is foolish to set such value on curiosities from other countries, and that we should not rate these things high only in proportion to the difficulty of getting them.

121

Horses and oxen are our servants. I cannot deny that there may be a certain degree of cruelty in harnessing or binding them, and yet how can we help it when they are indispensable? Dogs are extremely helpful, and more valuable in safeguarding our belongings than men. But as they are universally employed we may not feel it wrong to possess them.

But no other animal should be kept. Animals who delight in speed are crammed into locked cages. The wing-feathers of birds are cut, and they also are caged—they who yearn for fields, mountains, and the open skies! How can those whose hearts are merciful be callous to their anguish? How can we draw our pleasure from such suffering? It is an evil heart that can accept any satisfaction from the torment of living creatures.

The Chinese Oshiyu was a true lover of birds, because his delight lay in making them his companions while they flew free in the forest, but never by caging and tormenting them. Nor, as I have read, should we even keep strange and unusual birds and animals.

122

In cultivating a man's faculties, first come book-learning and the lessons taught by the wise men.

I should put good handwriting second. Not that one need specialise in this unless for some special purpose, but it is certainly a part of learning.

Thirdly, medicine should be studied, for that is important for our own health and a means of helping others, and it is a strong aid to loyalty and filial piety.

Then come archery and horsemanship, rightly ranked among the Six Arts of Shura.¹ We must diligently study the civil and military services and medicine as being altogether useful.

Fifthly, I rank the knowledge of cookery, for food is the heaven of man. An expert in the flavouring and harmonising of foods will be highly esteemed.

¹ The old Chinese Law.

And then we come to handiwork. It is invariably useful.

Outside these, other things are comparatively needless for us, and it is not well to attempt to be too versatile. In fact, I consider it rather derogatory to a gentleman. I allow that skill in poetry and music was highly esteemed by our ancients, but these matters seem to have little relation to modern political conditions. Gold is all very well, but give me iron for use !

127

Why waste your time on reforming what is not worth reforming ?

128

Masafusa Dainagon was a man of considerable ability and a good man, and the Emperor was disposed to recognise it by promotion to the rank of Taishō. One day, however, a courtier remarked that he had seen him do a hateful action. The Emperor asked its nature, and he replied :

"I saw Lord Masafusa mutilate the legs of a living dog to feed his hawk. I saw it through the fence."

In hot disgust the Emperor vented his displeasure by not promoting Masafusa.

Now it is difficult to believe that a man of such

rank would own a hawk, and it was doubtless untrue that he had mutilated a dog. But though one sympathises with the victim of such a slander one rejoices in the noble heart of the Emperor and his loathing of such cruelty.

Vile indeed is the wretch who mercilessly slaughters living creatures, nor can I except those who cause them to fight each other. If we study birds, animals, and even insects, we shall recognise that they love their offspring, crave the care of their parents, know the joys of friendship, are full of hope and desire and cling to life. It may be said that as they have not the reasoning powers of men, they feel these things even more passionately. How then can we torture or slay them? Sure am I that the man who knows these things and still is merciless is far below the level of humanity.

129

Gwankwai¹ says it was his principle never to be troublesome to good men. But to apply this precept, it is clear that we should be troublesome to none, nor should we tyrannise over them. Nor force the wills of people in inferior positions into submission.

And I have observed some people delight in teasing and scolding young children. A grown-up

¹ A Chinese sage.

man, to whom all this is the merest joke, thinks nothing of what to a young child is a terrifying shock. It is cruel indeed to take pleasure in a child's fancy.

Fleeting and empty are the joy, fury, grief and enjoyments of a grown-up man, but who can undervalue their importance to him? You wound a man far more deeply by injuring his soul than his body. Indeed, disease is often the result of mental maladjustment.

Diseases seldom attack us from without. Observe how a medicine will often fail to induce a necessary perspiration, but see a man thrown into some terrible perplexity or shame and note how the perspiration instantly pours from him.

This is caused entirely by mental process. We may read in history of the man whose black hair became white as snow on descending from painting the tablet in the Ryo-un-Palace.¹

130

Best never to quarrel! If you disagree with others, yet yield, for it is better to remain in comfort behind rather than fight for the front place.

A man who is eager at games must naturally rejoice in victory and in excelling all others in

¹ The inscription on the topmost tablet had been forgotten, and a painter was hauled up in a basket to write it, with the above result.

skill. And that being so he cannot endure defeat without suffering. And if we rejoice in the defeat of others, and they in ours, it is difficult for either side to display equanimity. It is certainly opposed to morality to rejoice in the disappointment of others, nor is it seemly for a man to exult in his own superior acuteness and exercise it to the discomfiture of his friends, and still worse is it to cheat and to use artifice under the guise of merriment.

As time goes by, these small dissensions may grow to lifelong hatred, and all their root is the desire of superiority !

I consider that if a man desires to excel, it should only be in culture and conduct, and certainly he will not boast of *that* excellence. It is not well to compete with friends. It is only by the strength of education that great position and profit can be renounced.

133

The Emperor in his sleeping room lies with his head to the east, and Confucius is said to have done the same, on the ground that all vital energy comes from the east.¹ A sleeping room is generally so constructed, however, that the sleepers lie with their heads towards the south.

¹ It is the quarter of male energy as opposed to female passivity.

But the Emperor Shirakawa lay with his head to the north when sleeping. Some say the north should be avoided, because the great shrine of Ise lies south of Kyōto, and the Emperor's feet would thus point to the shrine, which should not be. But in the ceremony of worshipping the Ise shrine from a distance, the Emperor faces south-east, not south.

137

The full glory of the blossoming cherry and the moon in a clear sky are not the only things worth seeing. It is as moving a matter to watch for the moon when the sky is dark with rain-clouds, or to be debarred from visiting the beauty of spring. And again, the garden in all its pride of blossom and the garden faded and dead in winter are equally suggestive.

How many poets begin with the sentiment: "I visited the flowers, but they lay dead before me." Or, "I longed to visit them, but alas! it was not my fate." Are not these words as moving as "I saw the blossoms"? Sensitive persons will feel the grief of the flowers and the waning moon, but the lout will say, "Why, it's only a withered bough! What is there to look at in that?"

The truth is that the beginning of anything and its end are alike touching. Is the love of a man

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or a woman heart-moving only when they are together? What of the sorrow of separation, the empty token, the long waking night, the distant place? What of recalling with all the ache of memory bygone days, the little desolate grass-grown dwelling? These things are the very torture of lovers.

A fading moon in the blush of dawn is more appealing than in its full round flooding the earth with glory. Vast and dark pines with moonlight filtering through the boughs, the moon obscured by drifting clouds, are not these the sources of profound emotion? And the heart is pierced by the beauty of moonlight slipping like water from oak and maple leaves as surely as by the longing for beloved friends and the cheerfulness of cities.

And again the moon and the flowers must not be loved with the sense of sight only. We may sit at home, and with the inward sight behold the glory of spring and the gliding moon.

Note that a man of true taste is never one who gorges himself with obvious beauty. He loves the more refined and intimate shades. You will find the lout fixed before the blossoms with gloating looks, exhilarated with drink, reeling off trick poems and heartlessly tearing off great boughs laden with bloom. You will find him dipping his paws in the purity of the flowing spring or tranquil lake. He will trample new-

fallen snow and leave his hoof-marks upon it. Invariably he is unable to rejoice in beauty without pawing it.

Such men view the beautiful ceremonies of the festival from their own dull standpoint. They see it all with heavy miscomprehension. Why should they wait on the stand until the procession comes along? No, they will be eating and drinking and playing chequers and what not in some den behind. When it is announced up they scramble, hurrying and scurrying. You would think some catastrophe was upon them—they so push and thrust, mad lest anything should escape them. Out come the loud coarse comments, and when the first part is over down they scramble again, announcing that they will be up in time for the next. I take it that this is the attitude of the novelty hunter and not of the beauty lover.

.

If it were a man's fate to outlive every other inhabitant of the world, would it necessarily mean a very long life? Take a large vessel brimming with water. Pierce a very little hole. The drops are small enough, yet the steady drip will empty it inevitably. Is there a day in the city when someone does not die? There is no day when the dead do not depart on their journey to burial-places, and a coffin-maker runs no risk

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of keeping *his* goods long on the shelf! Nor are youth and strength any guarantees of long living. The fragility of life! We should rather be astonished that we have held on until to-day. Where, I ask, can this world's joy be found?

The soldier leaving home faces death and knows it, he lays aside home and individuality. The recluse, far from the world, meditating peacefully on running brooks and rocks, may flatter himself that death will forget him. But no. There lies his mistake. Transience eats away the very mountain, and death is his companion as surely as he is the soldier's.

154

It so happened that Tamekane Dainagon Nyudō was once driven by a rainstorm into shelter at the Toji Gate. A number of beggars were sheltering at the same time. There he beheld every kind of deformity distorted limbs can offer. He looked upon them at first with interest, and then with horror. Better the dullest average, he thought, as he left the place! Up to this time he had been especially interested in the abnormal culture of plants and especially of little trees with distorted boughs. Now it occurred to him that the case of these crippled trees resembled that of the distorted unfortunates he had seen beneath the gate. It gave him a

disgust with his collection of trees and he uprooted and discarded them. For my part I think he was entirely in the right.

162

There was a monk of the Henjō Temple named Shoshi who had taken great trouble to tame the birds who dwelt on the lake. One day he cunningly spread food for them inside the temple as well as outside. In great numbers they hurried in through the open door to secure it. He stepped in after them and seized such as he could catch. It so happened that some boys were at work cutting the grass, and hearing the shrieks of the birds they spread the news. The villagers rushed to the scene, fearing some accident, and there beheld the cruel wretch catching and killing the terrified geese. These good souls seized the monk and hauled him away to the police, and he was packed off to prison with the bodies of the murdered birds hanging about his neck.

166

When I reflect upon the thought of mankind and its purpose, I compare it to a man who models a snow image of the Buddha and proposes to decorate it with the precious substances and jewels in spring and to build a temple to house it. But can the snow tarry until the spring?

Truly a man's life is like an image of snow thawing and wasting daily.

184

Matsushita Zenni¹ was the widowed mother of Tokiyori. She once invited him to come and see her. He arrived and found her in the act of patching the holes on the paper-covered sliding doors with a knife and rice-starch paste. They were black with dirt. Her elder brother Yoshikage, being present, said to the old lady, "And pray, why not order the servant to mend the holes? It is his business." She replied: "The nun considers she can do it quite as well as the servant!" Yoshikage then remarked, "You know, it really would be better to repaper the whole thing, for your patches are perfectly hideous!" She replied: "Certainly the nun intends that all shall be repapered, but she has resolved to mend the holes to-day." Perhaps her reason was that it might suggest some important ideas to a young man's mind.

Now here she was absolutely right. Certainly thrift is a first essential of right living, and though but a woman she had in this respect the intuition of a sage. When it is remembered that she bore a son who governed the country, we must own that here we have a remarkable woman.

¹ Known as the nun.

188

Once upon a time a man resolved that his son should be a priest, and ordered him to study the law of Karma and practise oratory, since he was to become a preacher. But he was also resolved that the lad should learn riding, for as he naturally would possess no carriage, it would have an unhandsome appearance if on attending a temple for preaching he could not ride and were ridiculously unhorsed. After that it occurred to him that if rice-wine were offered after preaching he should have some pleasant accomplishment to grace it, and the boy learnt singing. Becoming interested in riding and singing, his interest in the two at length completely absorbed him and he became an old man before he had time to think of preaching.

Now he was not the only example of this kind of thing, for the world offers many. A young man is told he must be a cultured man, a learned man, or fulfil some other of the many aims open to him. It sounds easy enough, and he at once begins to take things easily! Thus each day drifts by and, interested in detail, he neglects the object. He idles and ages without having anything to show for it. He is jack of all trades and master of none, and does not make the figure he expected. The revolving years carry him

away with them as smoothly as a wheel rolling downhill.

So, for my part, I say—fix your mind on the most important object before you. Choosing that and discarding all the rest, work at it with a will. In one day or even in one hour many things will present themselves for decision. Choose the best of them for yourself and lose not a moment in attacking it. If you are attacking everything you conquer nothing.

Example. A man playing at *go*¹ does not make a single move by chance. He concentrates on victory, and has the larger aspects of the game in view rather than the trifling details all the time. Again—let us say a man who lives at Kyōto has hurried to Higashiyama on business, but then finds it can be more profitably done at Nishiyama. Is he to think that now he is at Higashiyama he may as well put in a bit of business there and put off that at Nishiyama for a day or two? No. A moment's indolence may condition the indolence of a lifetime. Fear it!

Resolving on a certain course, why trouble your head if you do not shine in other matters, and why bemoan the slanders that may assail you? Nothing worth doing can be accomplished without devotion to that and neglect of all else.

It happened once that in a gathering two

¹ A game with points of resemblance to chess and to backgammon.

kinds of grasses were discussed, and some one said, "The holy man of Watanabe knows all there is to know about them." A monk named Tōren was present. "It is raining hard," said he; "will one of you lend me a straw rain-coat and a rain-hat? I am off to the holy man of Watanabe to learn what he knows about these grasses." His friends asked, "Why this hurry? Why not delay until the rain has stopped?" He answered, "Does a man's life stand still until it stops raining? And if the holy man or I die, how am I to know the facts about these grasses?" Off he went without delay, and they say he learnt exactly what he desired. I like that story well.

"Swift decision succeeds." A man should know how to estimate the relative importance of things with the same judgment as this monk showed in relation to the grasses.

190

I think it inadvisable for a man to live with his wife in the ordinary way. It goes better if he lives apart from her. If we hear a man has married such and such a woman and lives with her, the feeling aroused neighbours upon contempt. A husband may find charm in a plain woman and live happily enough with her, but to outsiders it must appear a kind of ignominy. Or if she is a

beauty he may worship her. It generally is the one or the other.

There is, however, very little beauty left in the struggle and strain of household affairs and in childbirth. She fades, and when her husband dies she becomes withered and a nun. A wretched enough ending.

But whatever kind of woman she may be, her charm for her husband wears thin if they live together night and day, and no doubt she will feel exactly the same about him. Whereas, if they live apart and he visits her from time to time, they will keep up the mutual attraction. It will always be a little festival to arrive in the daytime and spend the night.

191

The person who believes that the night hours do not set off beauty to advantage is very much in the wrong. Consider! It generally takes the contrasting background of night to set off the hue and brilliance of ornament. In the full blaze of midday simplicity and elegance are the notes to be struck, whereas magnificence and impressiveness can hardly be over-emphasised in dress at night. To my taste beauty is most beautiful by lamplight, and the subdued murmur of lovers' voices has irresistible attraction at night.

Even if there be no unusual function, what can be more agreeable than to watch courtiers in their splendid panoply arriving at court in the gathering dusk? Young married people who are still engrossed with each other may be careless as to the hourly routine of the day, but they will be wise to be meticulous about their dress, no matter how informal and intimate their meetings. I own I like the man who is at the trouble of doing his hair again for the evening's pleasure, and I think the better of the woman who, as it draws on, goes off to her room and her mirror to put a few improving touches to the charm of her complexion.

235

Vagrants do not enter an inhabited house, though a deserted house may be freely entered by any chance passer or be taken possession of by foxes or owls or haunted by the wild woodland spirits. For then there is none to say them nay.

So also it is because a mirror is empty of all form and colour that every image in turn reflects itself. Should it have form and colour in itself it could reflect no images. Thus an empty space may be filled by anything and every desire may nest in an empty and masterless heart. Were there a Master ruling within it there would be no base intruders.

237

In Tamba is a place named Izumo, and in it a shrine built on the lines of the great shrine at Ise. I made an expedition there one day with that saintly man known as Shōkai and a few other friends. We brought some preserve made of beans and some rice as sustenance, and each of us worshipped at the shrine with earnest faith. However, seeing that the lion and dog images in front of the shrine were facing in the wrong direction, Shōkai's saintly spirit was much perturbed and he said: "There is something very moving in seeing the lion placed in this strange position. No doubt there is some profound meaning in this circumstance." Tears moistened his eyes as, turning to us, he added: "Is it possible, my friends, that the position of this lion does not affect you? For myself, I consider it unique and amazing." We all gazed upon it with wondering delight, saying, "Indeed, yes! Such a thing has never been seen before. Let us carry the news back to the people of Kyōto!" The holy man's enthusiasm rose to fever heat, and he caught a refined and cultivated-looking Shintō priest who happened along and put the question to him. "We presume to think there must be some profound reason for the lion facing thus. Probably it is studied from some ancient pre-

cedent. May be we favoured with an explanation ? ”

The priest replied gently :

“ You may well be astonished, sir. Some mischievous wretches twisted it about and well deserve punishment.” He went up to the sacred marvel and gave it a twirl and off he went. The saintly tears of delight had been entirely wasted !

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